

PUSH UP AND THINK THIN WITH A BALLOON

I could have named this activity *Suck It In*, to be more descriptive; but it didn't sound as nice. Either way, it's about drawing in the core muscles to support overhead reaching.

Benefits »

- ⦿ Challenges and strengthens core muscles.
- ⦿ Strengthens back extensors.
- ⦿ Helps with the everyday skill of reaching overhead.

Set It Up »

You will need one balloon per participant. Optionally, you may choose to add a light-weight medicine ball or a balance disc for some participants.

How to Do It »

The Start

- ⦿ Participants sit tall in their chair with hips touching the chair back for extra support.
- ⦿ They lift balloon to just overhead, almost touching the head. Elbows are bent.
- ⦿ Inhale and sit tall to prepare.

The Moves

Use the following cues.

- ⦿ Exhale and extend both arms to push your balloon directly upward, a little farther overhead.
- ⦿ Inhale again and draw in the abdominal wall tightly.
- ⦿ Exhale and push the balloon a little higher (extend the arms and torso a little more).
- ⦿ Keep your abs tight, but allow your torso to extend.
- ⦿ Take your time.
- ⦿ Do only 4 to 6 repetitions to start and progress to being able to do 6 to 12.



Take It Further »

- ⦿ Increase the number of lifts.
- ⦿ Move slowly and encourage more height.
- ⦿ Use a lightweight ball.

Give It More Balance »

- ⦿ Sit closer to the edge of the chair.
- ⦿ Sit on the edge of the chair with offset or tandem feet.
- ⦿ Place feet on a balance disc.
- ⦿ For private training, try sitting on a balance disc, but be careful!

Keep It Safe »

Drawing abs in while lifting tall will do wonders for keeping this exercise comfortable because the back is better supported. Nothing should hurt.